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Narrator: Muammer İskent,  
reporter for  
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Collected by Jo Ann Conrad

A Laz<sup>1</sup> Invents Excuse for Breaking Law

There was a Laz who decided to go fishing even though he did not have a fishing permit. A zealous government employee went to him and asked to see his permit, but the Laz did not have any permit. "Why are you fishing without a permit?" he asked

"I am not fishing," the Laz said.

"What about this fish pole? What about the bait that is dangling from the end of your fishing line?"

"Oh, that thing!" said the Laz. "I am trying to teach that worm how to swim!"

<sup>1</sup>The word Laz refers to residents of the Turkish Black Sea coast. Some of them in the easternmost provinces of Giresun, Trabzon, Rize and Artvin belong to an ethnic minority known as the Lazi. Laz people are stereotyped as being stupid or inept, but in tales which they tell about themselves they are often pictured as clever.